

Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 (previously amended): A method of applying a protective coating to a bottom surface of a wafer, and of protecting bottom edges and corners of chips forming part of the wafer, which comprises the steps of:

forming trenches in a top surface of the wafer;

applying a top side dicing tape to the top surface;

grinding the wafer at a bottom surface opposite the top surface and thereby laying open the trenches;

applying a protective material on the bottom surface and at the same time filling all the trenches to protect the bottom surface and the bottom edges and corners; and

hardening the protective material to form a protection layer.

Claim 2 (previously amended): A method of dicing a semiconductor wafer, which comprises:

applying a protective coating to a bottom surface of the wafer in accordance with claim 1; and further

fixing the protection layer to a mounting tape for fastening the wafer onto a dicing frame;

removing the top side dicing tape;

dicing the wafer into dies through the hardened protective material; and

picking the dies off the mounting tape.

Claim 3 (previously amended): A method of applying a protective coating to a bottom surface of a wafer, and of protecting bottom edges and corners of chips forming part of the wafer, which comprises the steps of:

forming trenches in a top surface of the wafer;

applying a top side dicing tape to the top surface;

grinding the wafer at a bottom surface opposite the top surface and thereby laying open the trenches;

applying a glue layer onto a mounting tape; and

mounting the wafer on the mounting tape and at the same time causing the glue to fill all the trenches to protect the bottom surface and the bottom edges and corners.

Claim 4 (previously amended): A method of dicing a semiconductor wafer, which comprises:

applying a protective coating to a bottom surface of the wafer in accordance with claim 3; and further

removing the top side dicing tape;

dicing the wafer into dies through the hardened glue; and

picking the dies off the mounting tape.

Claims 5-7 (cancelled).